IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims and add new claims 36-39 as shown below:

Claims 1-11 (cancelled)

Claim 12 (previously presented): A method for the preparation of L-amino acids, comprising

culturing coryneform bacteria which include an overexpressed sigD gene having the polynucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1, in a medium suitable for the expression of the sigD gene to thereby produce L-amino acids, wherein overexpression is achieved by increasing the copy number of said polynucleotide or by operably linking a promoter to said gene.

Claim 13 (cancelled)

Claim 14 (previously presented): The method according to claim 12, wherein the L-amino acids are lysine.

Claim 15 (cancelled)

Claim 16 (previously presented): The method according to claim 12, further comprising isolating the L-amino acid.

Claims 17and 18 (cancelled)

Claim 19 (previously presented): The method according to claim 12, wherein overexpression is achieved by transforming said bacteria with a plasmid vector which comprises the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1.

Claims 20-22 (cancelled)

Claim 23 (currently amended): The method according to claim 12, wherein the bacteria being fermented comprise, at the same time, one or more genes which are overexpressed; wherein the one or more genes is/are selected from the group consisting of:

a gene which encodes dihydrodipicolinate synthase,

a gene which encodes glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase,

a gene which encodes triosephosphate isomerase,

a gene which encodes 3-phosphoglycerate kinase,

a gene which encodes glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase,

a gene which encodes pyruvate carboxylase,

a gene which encodes malate-quinone-oxidoreductase,

a gene which encodes ~~a~~ aspartate kinase,

a gene which encodes homoserine dehydrogenase,

a gene which encodes threonine dehydratase,

a gene which encodes acetohydroxy acid synthase,

a gene which encodes dihydroxy acid dehydratase, and

<u>the Coryneform glutamicum</u> a gene which encodes a Zwa1 protein.

Claim 24 (previously presented): The method according to claim 12, wherein the bacteria being fermented comprise, at the same time, one or more genes which are eliminated; wherein the one or more genes is/are selected from the group consisting of:

a gene which encodes phosphoenol pyruvate carboxykinase,

a gene which encodes glucose-6-phosphate isomerase, and

a gene which encodes pyruvate oxidase.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The method according to claim 12, wherein the bacteria are Corynebacterium glutamicum.

Claims 26-28 (cancelled)

Claim 29 (currently amended): A process for the preparation of L-amino acids, comprising culturing a coryneform bacterium which comprises an overexpressed polynucleotide ~~consisting of~~ comprising the nucleotides 301 to 864 of SEQ ID NO: 1, in a medium suitable for the expression of a sigD gene to thereby produce L-amino acids, wherein overexpression is achieved by transforming said bacteria with a vector comprising said polynucleotide.

Claim 30 (currently amended): A process for producing L-amino acids comprising:

a) culturing coryneform bacteria which comprise ~~the~~ an overexpressed polynucleotide of SEQ ID NO:1, in a medium suitable for expression of the sigD gene to thereby produce L-amino acids, wherein overexpression is achieved by transforming said bacteria with a vector comprising said polynucleotide; and

b) isolating the L-amino acids.

Claim 31 (previously presented): A method for the preparation of L-amino acids, comprising:

culturing coryneform bacteria, which include an overexpressed sigD gene having a polynucleotide sequence which encodes the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2, in a medium suitable for the expression of the sigD to thereby produce L-amino acids, wherein overexpression is achieved by increasing the copy number of said polynucleotide or by operably linking a promoter to said gene.

Claim 32 (previously presented): The method according to claim 31, further comprising isolating the L-amino acids.

Claim 33 (previously presented): The method according to claim 31, wherein said increased copy number is achieved by transforming said coryneform bacteria with a plasmid vector which comprises a nucleotide sequence which encodes the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

Claim 34 (previously presented): The method according to claim 31, wherein the coryneform bacteria produce L-lysine.

Claim 35 (previously presented): The method according to claim 31, wherein the bacteria are Corynebacterium glutamicum.

Claim 36 (new): The method according to claim 29, wherein the bacteria being fermented comprise, at the same time, one or more genes which are overexpressed; wherein the one or more genes is/are selected from the group consisting of:

a gene which encodes dihydrodipicolinate synthase,

a gene which encodes glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase,

a gene which encodes triosephosphate isomerase,

a gene which encodes 3-phosphoglycerate kinase,

a gene which encodes glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase,

a gene which encodes pyruvate carboxylase,

a gene which encodes malate-quinone-oxidoreductase,

a gene which encodes ~~a~~ aspartate kinase,

a gene which encodes homoserine dehydrogenase,

a gene which encodes threonine dehydratase,

a gene which encodes acetohydroxy acid synthase,

a gene which encodes dihydroxy acid dehydratase, and

the Coryneform glutamicum a gene which encodes a Zwa1 protein.

Claim 37 (new): The method according to claim 29, wherein the bacteria being fermented comprise, at the same time, one or more genes which are eliminated; wherein the one or more genes is/are selected from the group consisting of:

a gene which encodes phosphoenol pyruvate carboxykinase,

a gene which encodes glucose-6-phosphate isomerase, and

a gene which encodes pyruvate oxidase.

Claim 38 (new): The method according to claim 30, wherein the bacteria being fermented comprise, at the same time, one or more genes which are overexpressed; wherein the one or more genes is/are selected from the group consisting of:

a gene which encodes dihydrodipicolinate synthase,

a gene which encodes glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase,

a gene which encodes triosephosphate isomerase,

a gene which encodes 3-phosphoglycerate kinase,

a gene which encodes glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase,

a gene which encodes pyruvate carboxylase,

a gene which encodes malate-quinone-oxidoreductase,

a gene which encodes ~~a~~ aspartate kinase,

a gene which encodes homoserine dehydrogenase,

a gene which encodes threonine dehydratase,

a gene which encodes acetohydroxy acid synthase,

a gene which encodes dihydroxy acid dehydratase, and

the Coryneform glutamicum a gene which encodes a Zwa1 protein.

Claim 39 (new): The method according to claim 30, wherein the bacteria being fermented comprise, at the same time, one or more genes which are eliminated; wherein the one or more genes is/are selected from the group consisting of:

a gene which encodes phosphoenol pyruvate carboxykinase,

a gene which encodes glucose-6-phosphate isomerase, and

a gene which encodes pyruvate oxidase.